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REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended and claims 15-27 are added. Claims 15-27 correspond to claims 1/9, 2-8, and 10-14. As such, Applicants respectfully submit no new matter is presented.

Withdrawal of Finality of Rejection

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner withdrawing the finality of the final rejection in the prior Office Action.

Claims 15-27 Allowable

Applicants respectfully acknowledge and appreciate the indication by the Examiner that claims 9 and 10, although objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten to be in independent format and include all of the features recited by the base claim and any intervening claims. In this regard, independent claim 15 corresponds to base claim 1 and dependent claim 9, thereby placing claim 15 in condition for allowance. Claims 16-27 correspond to claims 2-8 and 10-14 and should also be deemed allowable for their dependency on an allowable independent claim, i.e., claim 15.

Claims 1-14 Recite Patentable Subject Matter

Claims 1, 6, and 11-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over DE '715 in view of Hartel. Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DE '715, as applied to claim 1, and further in view of the well known prior art. Claims 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over DE '715, as applied to claim 6 and further in view of Goupy. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Pending claim 1 of the application recites an impact reduction vehicle bumper system wherein, among other features, each frame rail extension includes a first end face and a second end face opposite the first end face relative to a direction defined by the longitudinal axis of the frame rail extension, the first end face being coupled to a corresponding bracket and the second end face being disposed forward of a longitudinal front face of the beam.

Applicants respectfully submit none of the applied art of record teach or suggest such a feature.

In particular, DE '715 does not provide a frame rail extension (as indicated in the marked-up copy of Figure 3 attached to the Office Action) having an end face that is disposed forward of a longitudinal front face (9) of the beam (2).

As clearly shown in Figure 2 of Hartel, each frame rail extension (22) is attached to a longitudinal rear face of the transverse beam (5) and cannot possibly be disposed forward of a longitudinal front face of the beam (5).

Goupy does not teach or suggest a frame rail extension having an end face that is disposed forward of a longitudinal front face of the beam.

To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a rejected claim, the applied art of record must teach or suggest each feature of a rejected claim. See M.P.E.P. §2143.03. As explained above, none of the applied art of record, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest a frame rail extension having an end face that is disposed forward of a longitudinal front face of the beam. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit independent claim 1 is not rendered obvious in view of the applied art of record and should be deemed allowable.

Claims 2-14 depend from claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that these thirteen (13) dependent claims should also be deemed allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding rejections, allowance of claims 1-27, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, referencing docket number 105450-00009.

Respectfully submitted,
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